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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND
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Resumed thirty-second session
31 August-18 September 1992
Agenda item 9

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS RESUMED THIRTY-SECOND SESSION

Draft report

Rapporteur: Sally E. MOSS (Bahamas)

III. COORDINATION QUESTIONS

B. System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development

1. At its 42nd and 43rd meetings, on 16 September 1992, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (E/AC.51/1992/5).

General

2. The Committee was informed about the coordination mechanisms at Headquarters and at field level. It was felt that existing coordination mechanisms should be used for the coherent implementation of the Plan.

Discussion

3. A number of delegations welcomed the report, as it was the first time that United Nations activities related to Africa had been presented in the context of a system-wide plan. A number of delegations were of the view that that was a first step towards the development of a full system-wide plan. The view was also expressed that CPC should have been clearer in its request for the preparation of the Plan.

4. A number of delegations stressed that the Plan of Action should be seen as a dynamic and flexible instrument for agencies of the United Nations system in carrying out activities for African economic recovery and development.

5. A number of delegations, in referring to previous plans of action, stressed the importance of the implementation of the System-wide Plan for Africa and its use as a guideline by the agencies of the United Nations system.

6. A number of delegations were of the view that the Plan of Action was mainly a compilation of activities. It was felt, however, that it would provide a useful framework for action by the United Nations system.

7. A number of delegations were of the view that since African economic recovery was one of the five priority areas of the medium-term plan that were identified in General Assembly resolutions 45/253 and 45/255, adequate resources should be made available for the implementation and follow-up of the Plan of Action.

8. A number of delegations emphasized the need for African responsibilities in respect of democratization, accountability and respect for human rights to be included in the Plan.

9. A number of delegations pointed out that the issue of women and development was inadequately reflected and called for more emphasis to be given to that important subject.

10. One delegation wished to be advised of the outcome of the current initiative to review the Tropical Forestry Action Programme (TFAP) and its implication for the process of launching and implementing new strategies and action programmes for sustainable forestry development in Africa, and of the steps which FAO was taking to coordinate its activities with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), given the latter's role in sustainable forest management.

11. A number of delegations stressed the need for leadership by the Secretary-General and commitment by the executive heads of the United Nations agencies and bodies for the effective implementation of the Plan.

Conclusions and recommendations

12. The Committee expressed concern about the late issuance of the report, which put unwelcome and unnecessary pressure on it in carrying out its work.

13. The Committee noted that the Plan had the structure of a compilation of activities and considered it to be a first step towards a more integrated approach as its implementation developed. The Committee recommended that the link between the System-wide Plan and the United Nations medium-term plan needed to be clarified.

14. The Committee expressed disappointment at the minimal reference to the role of women in development and requested that that be redressed to include, in particular, access of women to the decision-making level.

15. The Committee recommended that, in accordance with the objective of raising global awareness of the critical socio-economic and environmental situation in Africa, the Secretary-General launch, at the earliest possible time, the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

16. The Committee recommended that the priorities of the System-wide Plan be used as guidelines for the activities of the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system related to Africa.

17. It also recommended that the Secretary-General call upon all relevant executive heads of United Nations agencies and bodies to accord high priority to the implementation of the Plan.

18. The Committee emphasized the role of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its Chairman in the follow-up and coordinated implementation of the Plan by the specialized agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, and recommended that those bodies include specific programmes and activities related to Africa in their work programmes. The Committee urged the specialized agencies to continue to monitor the situation of resources available for Africa.

19. The Committee recommended that the Plan be monitored and updated in the framework of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force for African Economic Recovery and Development. At the intergovernmental level, the Committee decided to keep the implementation of the Plan under review. The Committee considered that the follow-up and implementation of the Plan needed to be discussed with ACC at a later stage.

20. The Committee recommended that since the Plan represented the contribution of the United Nations system to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, in accordance with paragraph 39 of annex II to General Assembly resolution 46/151, the process of updating it should be carried out after each review of the implementation of the New Agenda by the General Assembly.

21. The Committee recommended that revisions be submitted for consideration by CPC in 1994, 1996, 1997 and 1999.

22. The Committee also recommended that, in view of the importance of the Plan and the unsuccessful outcome of the previous one, the Secretary-General play a leading role in its implementation in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.